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*Ford of Fitz-ford; a Legend of Devon.* By Mrs. Bray, author of *De Foix*, &c. 3 vols. 8vo. Smith, Elder, and Co. London.—1830.

A mixture of truth with fiction is one of those devices which render the latter much more agreeable; hence has proceeded the artifice of attributing the discovery of a fanciful narrative, which its inventor wishes to introduce under the most favourable auspices, to some lucky chance; an old chest, a dropped bundle of family documents, or a detached paper of snuff, has thus been the clue to many a tale of wonders.

The writer of the volumes now before us, gives her readers an assurance that the "Legend of Devon" does not owe its origin to any such delusion, but that the facts on which its interest depends, have been collected from his-  
toric records, or well authenticated tradition.

"It was during a summer evening when we first visited the ruined gateway, now the only remaining vestige of the mansion of the house of Fitz-ford. As we passed along, my friend related various anecdotes respecting the place; but he more particularly drew my attention to Fitz-ford, as he told me that tradition had peopled even the solitary gateway, now in ruins, with the restless spirits of the invisible world; that strange forms were said to be there seen; and that one of these was of a truly German character; since a Lady Howard, famed in her lifetime for some great offence, was now nightly doomed, as a fearful penance, to follow her hound from Fitz-ford to Oakhampton-Park, between midnight and cockcrowing, and to return with a single blade of grass in its mouth; a punishment from which neither the mistress nor the hound could be released till every blade was consumed. My friend then told me that there were other and more probable traditions, supported by the evidence of history, connected with this gateway, which in early life had much interested his imagination."

Some of those more probable traditions form the groundwork of the present tale. The principal of them, and though truly horrible, not the less probable on this account, is that of an English judge, who sentenced his daughter to be burnt for the murder of her husband. Perhaps it is not known to all our readers, that this crime is considered in our law books to be one of the deepest atrocity. It is known by the name of petty treason: as being similar in character, though inferior in supposed degree, to that of high treason: for the husband being lord of his house or castle, an attempt upon his life by his only liege subject, his wife, was considered by our learned ancestors, who advocated most stubbornly the rights of MAN, as savouring strongly of an offence against sovereign authority. The punishment was as horrible as the crime was deemed atrocious. The culprit was to be suspended by the neck from the top of an upright stake, at the bottom of which a bundle of faggots were lighted up, so as thus to inflict at once the double agony of strangling and burning. The progress of humanity, without detracting from the apparent horror, has diminished the actual cruelty of the execution, by completing the former part of the sentence before the latter is put in operation. The fact may be as little known, and, perhaps, equally interesting, to many of our readers, that this punishment was inflicted, we believe, for the last time in Ireland, within half a century of

the present day, on a criminal in Dublin, on the spot in Baggot-street, where public executions used to be inflicted, before the progress of improvement launched the culprit into eternity more scientifically through the agency of the spring bolt and the drop.

A tale founded on such a heart-rending incident, must possess some claims on our attention. The occurrences selected, are said to have taken place during the reign of Elizabeth, a period of much excitement, and several historical particulars of the most striking event of that period, the captivity of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scotland, are interwoven into the narrative of domestic transactions.

Much attention is paid to the description of the natural scenery of Devonshire, and to its local customs. Perhaps, indeed, the author may be accused of expatiating too largely on these embellishments. Scenic descriptions, though highly grateful when slightly touched on by a master-hand, are apt to weary when the writer endeavours to infuse into the narration all the varied impressions which the first view of those displays of the gorgeous majesty of nature cannot fail to excite in a romantic temperament.

*Hints originally intended for the Small Farmers of the County of Wexford*, but suited to the circumstances of many parts of Ireland. By Mr. Martin Doyle. Fifth edition, Dublin, Curry and Co.

We are delighted to see that this very admirable little practical treatise on the agriculture of Ireland, has already reached a fifth edition. Though written in that plain and even homely style, which is perhaps best adapted to secure the attention of the working farmer, it is full of sound sense and shrewd observation. Besides the instructions as to quality and preparation of soils, rotation of crops, care and management of various species of farms, stock, &c. the present edition is enriched with minute directions on the culture of Tobacco, which has recently become so general in some parts of Ireland. Master Martin is opposed, and we think with great reason, to the general introduction of this weed into Ireland, as a noxious, uncertain and therefore unprofitable crop, but he conceives that in the immediate neighbourhood of Dublin, or other large cities, it may be grown with great comparative advantage, because street manure, which can be there procured at a cheap rate, is infinitely better suited for the culture of this crop than any farm-yard manure. To such of our readers as rejoice in the most ancient and honourable of all occupations, the labours of the field, we cordially recommend this little tract, as the most comprehensive and practically useful one we have ever seen on Irish farming.

#### FOREIGN LITERATURE.

*Schiller in his Forty-third Year*; from a Letter of the younger Voss.

Figure to yourself a man really of majestic stature, with a countenance open and handsome, though pale, and slightly withered; one who, when you contemplate him calmly, bears a look of gloom and seriousness about him, but whose features, when set in motion by social converse, glow with cordiality and animation. How few, how very few, possess a goodness and kind-heartedness like his! Since his health has been restored, life to him is one vast scene

of cheerfulness. His marriage has proved a happy one, and he doats upon his children with all a father's fondness. He delights in conversing on serious topics, but takes much interest in trivial matters, if there be but the slightest spark of life and soul about them. Few men have prepossessed me so enthusiastically as Schiller. He knows it, and treats me the more kindly for it. 'It is so seldom,' he once remarked, 'that young men approach me without some selfish end in view, or indeed any other save the desire of looking upon a "noticeable" man.'

#### ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

##### PRIVATE LETTER FROM ROME.

Rome, 20th February.

You chide me for not describing my sensations on visiting the Vatican; why, surely, my dear —, you need not be told for the eleven hundred and ninety-ninth time, that I agree with all that has been said, sung, written, or printed in praise of that glorious place, of Raphael, or Giulio Romano! or the scholars of that school; these must be seen to be understood. The same may be said of the capitol. There is the original St. Sebastian, the first copy of which I recollect to have seen, was by your old friend, Solomon Williams, and that day is as fresh, and that copy too, in my memory, as the original is now. Rome cannot be described—at least, not by me. Such crowds of palaces, galleries, studios! one collection rubs out the recollection of the other: years are required to see and record the great and noble works, here only to be found. The frescos delight me much, though injured, and fast going to decay, as they are. Guidos, Raphaels, Domenichinos and others, all delight me; and from almost every church of the three hundred and fifty that Rome contains, one is sure to come out with some agreeable recollection, arising from the combination, or selection of architecture, painting, or sculpture. How then can I hope to convey to you more than my feelings and gratifications? and these are, (I assure you honestly,) fully and abundantly satisfied and rewarded. Add to these the ruins, the associations of our youthful readings, on the very spot, so rich in composition, effect, and colour, and you may conceive the wonders of this place. Then I am surrounded by my family, no mean increase of pleasure; and as much at home as when you remember me in Dublin—have lots of artist friends, who pass an evening with us; music at home and abroad, and a rich circle of agreeable and respectable companions, (if not friends): foremost, Allan of Edinburgh, Williams, a glorious Welsh artist, Gibson the sculptor, and a very superior one too, and some six or eight others. Then we mix with some forty English and Scotch occasionally; apropos, an Edinburgh artist, Scoular, has taken my bust. He is a very clever man. Music, drawing, and languages fill our leisure hours, so that Rome, (though in one, and almost the truest sense) a gay and dissipated place, is, as you see, by us turned to account. We find it not easy to keep out of the vortex of fashion. I sketch a little out of doors, now that the weather has got milder, though it is still chill and cold, but the sun has gained immense power for February. Hills white towards Tivoli, and frost not over.